RAJYA SABHA

Thursday, the 20th August, 1992/
29 Sravana, 1914 (Saka)

The House met at eleven of the clock. **The Deputy Chairman** in the Chair.

ORAL ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS

Proposal for holding UPSC Examinations Electronically.

*581. SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Members of the Union Public Service Commission have sent a note to Government spelling out the difficulties involved in the proposed plan to hold the U.P.S.C. examinations electronically from next year; and

(b) if so, what is Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS (SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA): (a) and (b) The Commission has been expressed its keenness that full advantage should be taken of the up-to-date technology available to modernise Civil Services Examination, taking due precautions to ensure the confidentiality and secrecy of the examination system. To begin with, it is proposed by the Commission to test the administrative and technical viability of the application of Computer and Communication Technology, on a trial basis, while conducting a recruitment test.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Madam, UPSC selects the bureaucracy of the country. It is very unfortunate that for the last few years allegations have been made that there has been leakage of the IAS and the IPS question papers. In 1990-91, in the Ranode, a CBI inquiry was ordered. In 1992, in the Allahabad incident also a CBI inquiry has been ordered. Our Prime Minister has rightly suggested that electronic system for the UPSC examinations must be introduced immediately. But the response of the UPSC has been very lukewarm. They say that for three lakh candidates enough computers cannot be found. They also preferred a more serious anti-leakage system to the electronic system. I would like to know what the hon. Minister is going to do about implementing the decision of the Prime Minister to bring in the electronic system by next year by-passing the UPSC who are very half-hearted about bringing in the new system.

SHRI MOHAMMED AFZAL *alias* MEEM AFZAL: Madam, I am on a point of order.

उपसभापति : प्वांइट आफ आर्डर नहीं होता । (**व्यवधान**)

श्री मोहम्मद अफजल उर्फ मीम अफजल : मैडम, आज राज्य सभा का आखिरी दिन है और राज्य सभा में प्राइम मिनिस्टर का दिन है (**व्यवधान**)

†شری محمد افضل عرف م۔ افضل: میڈم آج راجیہ سبھا کا آخری دن ہے اور راجیہ سبھا میں پرائم منسٹر کا دن ہے... "مداخلت"...

उपसभापति : प्वांइट आफ आर्डर नहीं होता ।

श्री मोहम्मद अफजल उर्फ मीम अफजल वजीरे आजम यहां पर मौजूद नहीं हैं: कोई खास वजह बतायेंगे क्या है (**व्यवधान**)

†شری محمد افضل عرف م۔ افضل: وزیر اعظم ایوان میں موجود نہیں ہیں۔ کوئی خاص وجہ بتائیں گے کیا ہے... "مداخلت"...

†[ ] Transliteration in Arabic Script.

श्री अजीत जोगी : आपको प्रश्नों का जवाब मिलेगा । **(व्यवधान)**

श्री मोहम्मद अफजल उर्फ मीम अफजल : आज राज्य सभा का आखिरी दिन है, वजीरे आजम का दिन है ।

†شری محمد افضل عرف م۔ افضل: آج راجیہ سبھا کا آخری دن ہے۔ وزیر اعظم کا دن ہے۔

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: There is no point of order during the Question Hour. He does not know the rules.

SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA: This is very unfortunate...

श्री शंकर दयाल सिंह : अगर अफजल साहब ने कोई अच्छी बात उठाई है तो मैं समझता हूं सदन को **(व्यवधान)**

श्री मोहम्मद अफजल उर्फ मोम अफजल : वजीरे आजम साहब कहां मसरुफ हैं ?

†شری محمد افضل عرف م۔ افضل: وزیر اعظم صاحب کہاں مصروف ہیں۔

उपसभापति : आप बैठिए । मैं बताती हूं **(व्यवधान)** एक मिनट जरा बैठिए **(व्यवधान)**

श्री शंकर दयाल सिंह : प्रधान मंत्री जी को सदन में आना चाहिए। निश्चित रूप से हम लोग इस बात को **(व्यवधान)**

उपसभापति : मैं बताती हूं एक मिनट । प्रधान मंत्री जी **(व्यवधान)**

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Today is *Sadbhawana Diwas*. He is busy with some programme. (*Interruptions*).

†[] Transliteration in Arabic Script.

SHRI MOHAMMED AFZAL *alias* MEEM AFZAL: The Prime Minister is taking it very casually. (*Interruptions*).

श्री आर० एल० भाटिया : राष्ट्रपति भवन में राजीव जी पर एक किताब राष्ट्रपति जी रिलीज कर रहे हैं वे उस मौके पर गए हैं । **(व्यवधान)**

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please take your seats. (*Interruptions*). I know where the Prime Minister is. Please. (*Interruptions*). Please take your seats. I will inform him. I will inform him. I will inform him. Please take your seats. (*Interruptions*). Please take your seats. (*Interruptions*). I said, please take your seats. Please take your seats. (*Interruptions*). I will inform him. I will inform him.

बैठ जाइये **(व्यवधान)** मैं बता दूंगी । आप बैठिए न। **(व्यवधान)**

श्री शंकर दयाल सिंह : सत्ता पक्ष के लोग भी **(व्यवधान)** One minute. (*Interruptions*). The Prime Minister spoke to me. बैठिए बताती हूं **(व्यवधान)** मुझे मालूम है, मैं बताती हूं **(व्यवधान)**

Please sit down. (*Interruptions*) There is a 'Book Release' function a Rashtrapati Bhawan. The Prim Minister spoke to me personally. H said that he will be busy there, th is why, he would not be present. Mr Alva is competent enough in her ow right to answer.

SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MAL VIYA: Madam, what about the Ca inet Ministers? No Cabinet Minis is there..(Interruptions)..

SHRI SHANKAR DAYAL SINC We have no doubt in the compete of Mrs. Alva. But because today the last day we want that the P Minister should be here...(*Inter tions*)...

SHRI MOHAMMED AFZAL *alias* MEEM AFZAL: Because today is the last day we want the Prime Minister to come to the House... (*Interruptions*)...

SHRI V. NARAYANASAMY: Madam, what is this? The Prime Minister is busy... (*Interruptions*)...

SHRIMATI JAYANTHI NATARAJAN: The Minister is here... (*Interruptions*)

श्री एस० एम० अहलुवालिया : ... **(व्यवधान)** आप लोगों को सद्भावना कुछ नहीं है ... **(व्यवधान)**

उपसभापति : अभी बैठिए । क्वेश्चन आवर के समय ... **(व्यवधान)** अभी बैठिए । बैठ जाइए ...

SHRI MOHAMMED AFZAL *alias* MEEM AFZAL: The release of the book is more important than coming to the House... (*Interruptions*)...

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now that matter is closed. Please... (*Interruptions*)...

श्री शंकर दयाल सिंह : मैं कहना चाहता हूं कि उनका क्वेश्चन है ... **(व्यवधान)** यह बहस की बात आप लोग करना चाहते हैं तो मैं चाहता हूं कि इस पर बहस हो । प्रधान मंत्री जी को जानकारी थी कि नहीं ... **(व्यवधान)** आप इस पर बहस कर रहे हैं **(व्यवधान)** हा उस की डिगनिटी को मैन्टेन नहीं करेंगे तो ... **(व्यवधान)**

उपसभापति : आप बैठिए **(व्यवधान)**

श्री एस० एस० अहलुवालिया : इस तरह से चेयर के साथ दुर्व्यवहार कर रहे हैं। खुद वाइस-चैयरमैन के पैनल में रहकर इनको पता नहीं है कि चेयर के साथ कैसे व्यवहार किया जाता है ।

श्री शंकर दयाल सिंह : जब प्रधान मंत्री जी का दिन है तो प्रधान मंत्री जी को अपना कार्यक्रम इस तरह से रखना चाहिए था कि सदन में उपस्थित रहते ... **(व्यवधान)**

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Now enough is enough. Please, everybody, sit down... (*Interruptions*)... I request everybody to sit down... (*Interruptions*)... When any Minister or even the Prime Minister wants to abstain from the House they can take the permission from the Chair... (*Interruptions*)... I would not like any interruptions when I am saying something to the Members. The Prime Minister spoke to me in the morning and told me the importance of the function he is going to attend at the Rashtrapati Bhavan. He told me that on his behalf Mrs. Alva and other Ministers are present and they will answer. I, in my wisdom, thought it was absolutely all right... (*Interruptions*)...

अब जवाब दीजिए । अच्छा बस हो गया ।

Now no more discussion. After my ruling there should not be any more discussion on the matter. Mrs. Alva, you may answer the supplementary. We have already wasted a few minutes.

(व्यवधान) अच्छा जवाब देने दीजिए । मिसेज आल्वा को जवाब देने दीजिए ।

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Madam, she says she has forgotten the question.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I am sure she has forgotten it. I have forgotten it. I think the question was about computers and you said that it is expensive to provide so many computers because the number of students appearing for the UPSC examination is very large.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: No, no. My question was whether electronics system would be brought in by next year as assured by the Prime Minis-

ter in the other House and they will not allow the UPSC to soft-pedal the matter.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Madam, I wish to assure you that neither are we overriding the UPSC nor will the UPSC disagree on this issue. The qeustion is how smoothly and efficiently we can change the examination system. In the last few years we have found that a kind of suspicion arises after every exam. that some papers somewhere were leaked out or something happened and the very faith of the young people in the examination system tends to be corroded. Therefore, the Prime Minister did say in the other House that in order to restore total faith in the system, the only answer is the electronic system. Madam, almost 3 lakhs of candidates appear for the preliminary examination for the Central Services only every year and, therefore, we do feel that this system has to be made foolproof. We have started working on a system by which the normal preliminary examination can be transferred on to the electronic system. It is not that everybody is going to be given a computer and that every single person will sit at the same time and does the examination on the computer. The NIC is going to set up in each district, as the proposal now stands, a centre which will be available for various exams like bank exams and so on with the infrastructure and each student would be given three chances to go back again and to see whether he qualifies during a year... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: By what time would this be set up?

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Please let her answer. This is not a proper manner.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: A network already exists, as you know. It has to be strengthened and some additional facilities have got to be provided, which is being worked on. We have a working group that has been set up which has made concrete proposals. Madam, I cannot give a time-limit as to from which examination this is going to be utilised. But I would say that in November this year, the NIC itself is going to use it for its first examination which will cover 10 cities and 8,000 candidates. The UPSC has agreed that after observing this, they would have one of the smaller examinations conducted through this system and then having satisfied themselves that everything is all right, they would go in for the larger examinations which they are conducting.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Urgent steps need to be taken to restore the credibility of the UPSC. There is the Satish Chandra Committee which went into the recruitment by the UPSC. And regarding the composition of the UPSC, I would like to state that under article 316 of the Constitution, out of ten members of the UPSC, at least five will have to be from outside the Government, outside the bureaucracy. I am very sorry to bring to the notice of this House that today out of ten or eleven members of the UPSC, nine are bureaucrats or former bureaucrats. I want to know if the UPSC is going to be a heaven for retired bureaucrats or we are going to go by the Constitution of India where 50 per cent of the members of the UPSC, whatever the Government wants to do, have to be talented persons from outside. But that has not been done. This system is bringing in the bureaucracy of the country. Will the Government get this situation rectified? And I would also like to know as to when the Chairman of the UPSC is going to be appointed. It is headless today.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: We have an acting Chairperson, a lady, there. I hope that is not your objection... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: Are you making her the Chairman?

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: It is true that as per the requirements, it says that not less than 50 per cent of the members should have belonged to the Services or are members of the Services. It is true that over the years, and as we see it now, out of eleven members—the Chairperson's vacancy is there—we have eight out of the ten present members who have been bureaucrats of one service or the other at one time. I can't change them, since, you know, Madam, it is a Constitutional body... (*Interruptions*)

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: It is against the Constitution.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: No, this is not against it. It only says a minimum of at least 50 per cent. It has gone beyond 50 per cent. We are looking into this and we are also wanting that the balance should be restored. But, Madam, as the Member is aware, it is a Constitutional body where I can't throw out people till their terms are over. So only when their terms are over and when we are appointing new people, we shall certainly keep this in mind.

SHRI SURESH KALMADI: You have not mentioned about the Satish Chandra Committee.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: I am sorry. The Satish Chandra Committee was appointed in 1988. There were one set of matters which were referred to it and later another set were referred to the Committee. The two reports came; one in 1989 and one in 1990. Various recommendations have been made about improving the system of examinations and about various other things. The first part of the Report has been studied, recommendations have been approved and they will be implemented. The second part of the Report has been processed. It is awaiting the final clearance by the Cabinet.

SHRI SATYA PRAKASH MALAVIYA: Madam, this Committee was appointed under the Chairmanship of Professor Satish Chandra, the ex-chairman of the University Grants Commission. My quesion is whether Mr. Satish Chandra or his Committee made any recommendation about holding of examinations in the UPSC by electronic media.

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Madam, as I said, the Report came in 1989-90. It has not made any recommendation concerning conduct of examinations by electronic media. It was only last year, after reported leaks and cancellation of examinations, that the Prime Minister felt that we should go in for a system which would be foolproof so that this kind of problems could be avoided in future and that is how we went into studying the electronic system.

श्री सच्चिदानन्द : महोदया, आपके माध्यम से मैं मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहता हूं कि यह मौजूदा यू.पी.एस.सी. की जो कम्पोजिशन है, उसमें कितने सदस्य अध्यक्ष समेत हैं और साथ ही साथ कितने रिटायर्ड अधिकारी उसमें नियुक्त किए गए हैं ? आपने अभी-अभी उत्तर दिया, उसके साथ में मुझे यह भी जानकारी हासिल करनी है कि जो यह प्रवृत्ति निवृत्त अधिकारियों को नियुक्त करने की है, उसको रोकने के लिए आपका भविष्य का क्या कार्यक्रम है ?

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Madam, I have already assured the Members that in future people from educational and other sectors would also be represented on the UPSC keeping in view the requirements of the entire functioning of the UPSC...(*Interruptions*)...Madam, let me mention about the present break-up of the UPSC Members. There is a vacancy of the post of Chairman which has not yet been filled up. There is an acting Chairperson now. We have, therefore, ten Members out of whom

[Shrimati Margaret Alva]
eight are either retired officers or serving officers and two are non-bureaucrats.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: That she already answered...

श्री शंकर दयाल सिंह : महोदया, संघ लोक सेवा आयोग की परीक्षाएं कुछ वर्षों से विवाद का विषय बनी हुई हैं और यह चिंता का भी विषय है, जिसके बारे में मैंने तथा अन्य कई सदस्यों ने भी बार-बार मांग की है कि संघ लोक सेवा आयोग की रिपोर्ट पर इस सदन में बहस होनी चाहिए । मैं, जो कुछ माननीय सुरेश कलमाडी जी ने उठाया है, उसी क्रम में जानना चाहता हूं मंत्री महोदया से कि जो इलैक्ट्रानिक्स मीडिया के द्वारा परीक्षाओं का नियंत्रण या परीक्षा-फलों के संबंध में जो कार्रवाई संघ लोक सेवा आयोग में होने को है, वह किन-किन भाषाओं के द्वारा आप करने का विचार रखती हैं ? यह इसलिए मैं पूछ रहा हूं क्योंकि पिछले 6 वर्षों से यूनियन पब्लिक सर्विस कमीशन के सामने एक भारतीय भाषा संगठन द्वारा, इसमें भारतीय भाषाओं को मान्यता मिले, इसके लिए एक धरना चल रहा है । इसको मद्देनजर रखते हुए मैं जानना चाहता हूं कि जो इलैक्ट्रानिक्स मीडिया यानी कम्प्यूटर, जो भी आप निर्धारण करेंगे, किन-किन भाषाओं में उसका परिचालन होगा ?

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Madam, at the moment, the examination papers are printed in Hindi and in English—in two languages. But I would say that in electronics, the possibilities are unlimited. I mean once you switch over to this system, it would be easier to try the other recommendations as they come along. But at the moment, we are only planning for Hindi or for English.

DR. SHRIKANT RAMACHANDRA JICHKAR: Madam, I would like to know whether any pilot project was implemented to test the use of electronic media. If so, what are the results?

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Madam, as I said earlier, there are district NIC centres in the country already. The Expert Group has studied as to how the existing centres can be strengthened with increasing infrastructure facilities and I would say that by the end of October this year, the pilot test scheme and evaluation of its results will be done by the NIC for its own examination for which, as I said earlier, 8,000 candidates are expected to appear at ten centres. The tests have already been done by the NIC. In fact, they have given some demonstrations also to the UPSC and the UPSC has now been asked to be the observers for the tests which they are going to conduct and if they are satisfied, they can utilize the facility.

Madam, what I am trying to say is that this new system is not being created only for the UPSC examinations. There will be centres in the districts and the facilities would be available to anybody who wants to use them for various types of examinations, whether it is the Banking Service Commission or the public sector or the private sector or any other sector. They would pay and there would be the commercial availability of this for conducting the examinations for anybody who wants it.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Yes, Mr. Sangh Priya Gautam.

श्री संघ प्रिय गौतम : उपसभापति महोदया, संघ लोक सेवा आयोग के अंदर पिछले कई सालों से दो प्रकार की अनियमितताएं बराबर हो रही हैं । एक तो प्रश्न पत्रों का लीकेज और दूसरा, ऐसे लोग जो अनुसूचित जाति के नहीं है, फेक सार्टिफिकेट लेकर के आइ.ए.एस. बन गए हैं। अभी सुधीर कुमार नामक एक वैश्य ने शैड्यूल्ड कास्ट का सार्टिफिकेट अलीगढ से हासिल किया, जो जांच में सही पाया गया । लेकिन यू.पी.एस.सी. के अधिकारी न तो उनके खिलाफ एक्शन लेते हैं, जो लीकेज करते हैं और न उनके

कंसिलेशन ही करते हैं जो फेक सार्टि-फिकेट प्राप्त करते हैं। तो मैं माननीय मंत्री महोदय से यह पूछने जा रहा हूं कि यह लीकेज न हो और इलैक्ट्रानिक मीडिया प्रोवाइड करने में आप सफल नहीं हो सकती, तो क्या एरिंग आफिसर को आप कठोर दंड देने जा रही हैं और कोई ऐसा तरीका बनाने जा रही हैं जिससे प्रश्न पत्रों का लीकेज न हो सके और जो फेक सार्टिफिकेट प्राप्त करने वालों को दंडित नहीं करते हैं, तो क्या उनको दंडित करने जा रही हैं ?

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: Madam, I can say that earlier, some three years ago, there was a case where there had been some leakage. Three officers were suspended, criminal cases were filed, investigations were carried on right then and, as I said, three officers were suspended and action was taken.

After that, again there was a leakage and the CBI did establish that in the Ranchi press there was a leakage and, therefore, that examination was cancelled and the whole examination was held again. Later, FIRs were filed against those people who were involved locally there.

As far as the present one is concerned—you know the Allahabad case—this time it is under investigation by the CBI and we have got the final report from them.

About the fake SC/ST certificates, Madam, it happens not only in the case of the UPSC examinations, but it also happens at the time of admissions and various other things. But whenever a case comes up, I can assure the honourable Member that we take action. Even earlier we had cancelled the appointment of that officer who had been selected under the fake certificate and action has been taken. But the certificates are not issued by the UPSC. They are issued at the places where the candidates live or they take them from a local person and, therefore, it is not easy for me to detect and investigate every single case from every corner of the country.

SHRI SANGH PRIYA GAUTAM: What about the case which I mentioned? An inquiry has been held and the report submitted to the UPSC. Why action has not been taken so far?

SHRIMATI MARGARET ALVA: You mentioned the case of one Sudhir Prasad Verma. I would like to tell you that the DM, Allahabad has recently cancelled his SC Certificate and the UPSC is considering further action based on this against Mr. Verma's candidature itself.

SHRI SANGH PRIYA GAUTAM: Thank you.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Question No. 582.

SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: Madam, I want to put one question.

THE DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: We have other questions. We have to cover other questions also. I will allow you on another question. Now, let us try to cover more questions, please. Question No. 582, Mr. Bhandare.

Pak Army Chief's visit to India

@*582. SHRI MURLIDHAR CHANDRAKANT BHANDARE:†
SHRI RAJUBHAI A. PARMAR:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Pak Government have responded to India's invitation

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@Previously Starred Question No. 462, transferred from 10th August, 1992.

†The question was actually asked on the floor of the House by Shri Murlidhar Chandrakant Bhandare.